

REMARKS**Status Of Claims**

Upon entry of this amendment, claims 1-8 and 10-18 are pending and claims 1, 10, 14 and 15 are amended. Claim 9, containing allowable subject matter, is canceled herein and recitations from claim 9 are amended into independent claims 1, 14 and 15. No new matter is added.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has indicated the subject matter of claim 9 is allowable. (Office Action, on Page 9). Accordingly, Applicants herein amend independent claims 1, 14 and 15 to contain recitations of claim 9. Thus, Applicants respectfully assert all pending claims are allowable at this time.

Response To Claim Objections

Claim 9 stands objected to for allegedly improper grammar. Claim 9 is canceled herein rendering this objection moot.

Claim 10 stands objected to for allegedly improper grammar. Claim 10 has been amended rendering this objection moot. Thus, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of this objection.

Response To Claim Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-2, 4-7, 10-11, 14-16 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kusakabe (JP 2002-103783) in view of Lin et al. (US 6,022,104).

Claims 3, 8 and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kusakabe (JP 2002-103783) in view of Lin et al. (US 6,022,104), and further in view of Matsumoto (JP 9-295400). Claim 12 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kusakabe (JP 2002-103783) in view of Lin et al. (US 6,022,104), and further in view of Yoshinaga (US 2002/0041303). Claim 13 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kusakabe (JP 2002-103783) in view of Lin et al. (US 6,022,104), and further in view of Kuboki (US 4,975,780).

Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections. As set forth above, recitations from allowable claim 9 have been amended into independent claims 1, 14 and 15. Claims 1 and 14 recite:

... wherein the suction force applied by said suction means is determined so that a reacted product of the ink and the reacting liquid is uniformly distributed in an inside of a layer of the printing sheet.

Claim 15 recites:

... the suction force applied in said suction step is determined so that a reacted product of the ink and the reacting liquid is uniformly distributed in an inside of a layer of the printing sheet.

Applicants respectfully assert that none of the cited references whether considered separately, or in combination, teach or suggest all claimed elements of Applicants' claimed invention. Thus, no *prima facie* case of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) exists and Applicants request the withdrawal of all rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) and the allowance of this application.

CONCLUSION

The claims are now believed to be in a form for allowance and such action is hereby solicited.

If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through an additional personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

AUTHORIZATION

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required for timely consideration of this Amendment, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-4500, Order No. 1232-5333. A duplicate copy of this page is attached.

Respectfully submitted,
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